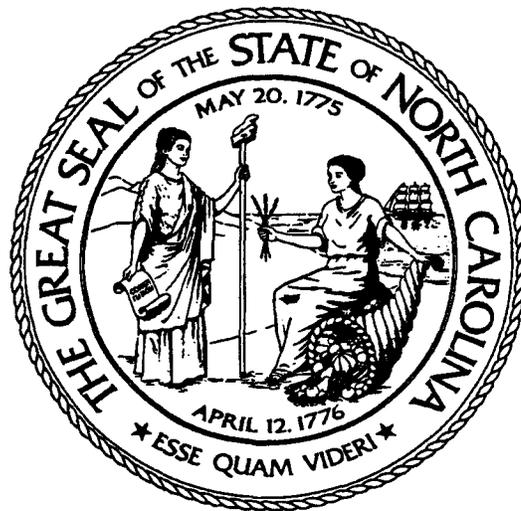


**LEGISLATIVE
RESEARCH COMMISSION**

ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLS COMMITTEE



**REPORT TO THE
1995 GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF NORTH CAROLINA**

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL..... i
LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH COMMISSION MEMBERSHIP..... ii
PREFACE..... 1
COMMITTEE PROCEEDINGS..... 3
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....7-8

APPENDICES

RELEVANT PORTIONS OF

UNRATIFIED H.B. 1319 (2ND EDITION)
OF THE 1993 SESSION, THE STUDIES BILL, AND
SENATE BILL 1200 OF THE 1993 SESSION..... A

MEMBERSHIP OF THE LRC COMMITTEE ON
ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLS..... B

LIST OF THOSE MAILED NOTICES OF THE
COMMITTEE'S MEETINGS..... C

STATUTES AND RULES IN NORTH CAROLINA ON
Alternative Learning Programs - Intervention Prevention Program D

FEBRUARY 7, 1994 LETTER TO GOVERNOR HUNT E

MAY 1994 PROGRESS REPORT F

LEGISLATIVE PROPOSAL -- A BILL TO BE ENTITLED AN ACT TO
IMPLEMENT THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLS
COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH
COMMISSION..... G

Section-by-Section Analysis of the Bill

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH COMMISSION
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RALEIGH 27601-1096



January 13, 1995

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE 1995 GENERAL ASSEMBLY:

The Legislative Research Commission herewith submits to you for your consideration its final report on Alternative Schools. The report was prepared by the Legislative Research Commission's Committee on Alternative Schools pursuant to G.S. 120-30.17(1).

Respectfully submitted,


Daniel T. Blue, Jr.
Speaker of the House


Marc Basnight
President Pro Tempore

Cochairmen
Legislative Research Commission



1993-1994

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PREFACE

The Legislative Research Commission, established by Article 6B of Chapter 120 of the General Statutes, is the general purpose study group in the Legislative Branch of State Government. The Commission is cochaired by the Speaker of the House and the President Pro Tempore of the Senate and has five additional members appointed from each house of the General Assembly. Among the Commission's duties is that of making or causing to be made, upon the direction of the General Assembly, "such studies of and investigations into governmental agencies and institutions and matters of public policy as will aid the General Assembly in performing its duties in the most efficient and effective manner" (G.S. 120-30.17(1)).

The Legislative Research Commission, prompted by actions during the 1993 Session, has undertaken studies of numerous subjects. These studies were grouped into broad categories and each member of the Commission was given responsibility for one category of study. The Cochairs of the Legislative Research Commission, under the authority of G.S. 120-30.10(b) and (c), appointed committees consisting of members of the General Assembly and the public to conduct the studies. Cochairs, one from each house of the General Assembly, were designated for each committee.

The study of Alternative Schools would have been authorized by Part II. Sec. 2.1 (90) of the 2nd Edition of House Bill 1319 which passed both chambers but inadvertently was among the bills not ratified at the end of the 1993 Session.

Part II of the 2nd Edition of House Bill 1319 would allow studies authorized by that Part for the Legislative Research Commission to consider Senate Bill 1200 in determining the nature, scope and aspects of the study. Section 2 of Senate Bill 1200 reads in part:

Sec. 2. The purpose of the study is to investigate the following:

- (1) Existing alternative schools and public and private programs for disruptive students in North Carolina's schools, including an examination of in-school and out-of-school suspension.
- (2) Existing State, federal, and local fiscal resources dedicated to alternative programs and schools for disruptive youth.
- (3) Existing support systems outside of public schools for children with histories of violent or anti-social behaviors.
- (4) Existing alternative schools and programs, including independent and nonprofit efforts, for disruptive students in other states, and the academic and social success rates of students involved in these programs.
- (5) New or pilot projects that address disruptive students in North Carolina.
- (6) Local collaborative efforts among local officials concerned with disruptive youth (courts, law officials, youth services, etc.) that are related to alternative schools, alternative programs, and residential placements.
- (7) Basic common components of successful alternative programs, including curriculum, staffing ratios, program activities, support staff needs, collaborative activities, use of educational technologies, and funding. The investigation of funding should include cost-efficient methods utilizing existing resources to provide alternative schools, alternative programs, and residential placements.
- (8) Existing North Carolina residential sites and potential residential alternatives for disruptive or troubled youth.
- (9) Analysis of the numbers and ages of students involved in highly disruptive or violent activities in the schools, including analysis of long-term suspensions and expulsions.
- (10) Unique professional staff development needs for educators who deal specifically with disruptive or troubled youths in alternative programs.
- (11) Support systems directed towards successful reentry of youth placed in alternative programs into mainstream school populations.

.....

The relevant portions of the 2nd Edition of House Bill 1319 and Senate Bill 1200 are included in Appendix A.

The Legislative Research Commission authorized this study in the Fall of 1993 under authority of G.S. 120-30.17(1) and grouped this study in its Education area under the direction of Representative Pete Cunningham. (House Bill 1319 was later amended and ratified in 1994 with the Legislative Research Commission studies 2nd Edition language deleted because the Legislative Research Commission had already acted on these matters).

The Committee was chaired by Senator Linda Gunter and Representative Jim Black. The full membership of the Committee is listed in Appendix B of this report. A committee notebook containing the committee minutes and all information presented to the committee is filed in the Legislative Library.

COMMITTEE PROCEEDINGS

The Committee held five meetings to consider and deliberate on the charge posed in Senate Bill 1200: January 26, February 2, May 4, October 20 and December 15, 1994.

At its January 26, 1994 meeting the committee heard testimony concerning existing alternative learning programs from the following speakers:

Calvin Wallace, then Assistant Superintendent of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg schools presented on the six programs in that county and Ken Mazzaferro, Principal, at Midwood High School, presented the Midwood model.

Peggy C. Mainess, Principal, and Tammy Beck, School Counselor at Catawba Valley High School in the Hickory city system and students Anthony Greenard, Akisha Tipps, and Jeannie Conner presented the Catawba Valley model.

The Alternative School Program in Wake County was represented by Assistant Superintendent Gloria Richeson; Associate Superintendent for Instructional Services Bill McNeal; Director of Communities in Schools, Debbie Bine; the President Wake County League of Women Voters Ricki Grantmeyer; Executive Director of Student Services Ron Anderson; Principal of Mary Phillips High School Patricia Johnson, and Laura Miller a student at Mary Phillips High School. Robert Hariss-Cannon a teacher at the Redirection Middle School also presented.

At its February 2, 1994 meeting the committee heard testimony concerning Options - Youth and Family Counseling Services program presented by Carolyn Biggerstaff, Executive Director; Bob Carr, Deputy Director; Suzanne Mellow, Superintendent in Alleghany County; Janice Linkler, teacher; and Buddy Marion, a family therapist. Ms. Biggerstaff explained that Options has two models, one trains the staff at an entire school to work with at-risk students; the other model is a self-contained class for twelve at-risk students. The second model is in place in the Alleghany Schools and was explained by Dr. Mellow, Ms. Linkler and Mr. Marion.

In response to its charge that it look at the alternative schools movement nationally the Committee heard from Donald Tassie, Director of Alternative Education in Jackson, Michigan and former president of the Michigan Alternative Education Organization.

Janis Ramquist of the Learning Disabilities Association of North Carolina made a brief presentation stating that 57 percent of learning disabled students in North Carolina drop out. She stated that alternative learning programs could decrease this drop-out rate by providing more appropriate placements for these students.

Vann Langston and Dennis Stacey of the Department of Public Instruction presented the results of a survey of the school systems concerning existing alternative learning programs. At that time the department identified seventy-seven programs

serving 6,148 students. (At the May meeting Mr. Stacey reported that the total number of programs was eighty-six statewide.)

Six types of programs were identified:

- Placement for exceptional children
- Placement for drop-outs
- Placement for at-risk students prior to suspension
- In-House temporary placement of students
- Placement for students needing extra credit to graduate

Two major goals for all programs were identified:

- To meet the need of students whose learning styles are not met in the traditional setting; and
- An alternative setting for drop-outs.

At the conclusion of this meeting the Committee voted to forward a letter to the Governor and legislative leadership asking that funding for alternative schools be considered during the 1994 extra session on crime. (See Appendix E of this report)

At its May 4, 1994 meeting the Committee heard from Philip Price and Johnnie Grissom of the Department of Public Instruction on funding available for alternative schools. Mr. Price stated that there is a fair amount of flexibility concerning the use of funds that local units can take advantage of to create an alternative learning program. A resource book How to Implement extended Services in Your School was distributed to members. The book includes a chapter on federal and State funding sources available to create alternative schools.

Mary D. Thompson, committee counsel, and Jim Watts, education specialist, made presentations on programs for at-risk students passed during the 1994 extra session including Intervention/Prevention, SOS and the Family Resource Center grant programs.

Dr. Patricia Brewer, Principal, Agnes Fullilove Community School in Pitt County presented that school's program with the assistance of Ms. Mary Willoughby, teacher; Dr. Randy Royall, Phillipi Church; Cecil Hardy with the Greenville Police Department and Anthony Harris, a student. Dr. Brewer emphasized that the success of the program depended on the cooperation of the community and school. Some criteria of Agnes Fullilove include small class sizes; individual education plans; parent/teacher support teams; a small and positive school environment; a student attendance bonus point program; aftercare services; and a student radio program.

At this meeting the committee discussed a number of preferred criteria for alternative schools including:

- funding should be available for K-12 grades;
- at risk students should be served in regular classrooms and separate facilities;
- there should be high expectations for both staff and students;
- for students returning to a traditional school programs that bridge the gap between the alternative schools and the traditional program are best;
- students should be encouraged to return to the traditional program;
- staff development for teaching at-risk students is key.

The committee discussed and approved an interim report to the Legislative Research Commission (See Appendix F of this report).

At its **October 20, 1994 meeting** the Committee heard presentations from the Department of Public Instruction concerning attributes and criteria for exemplary alternative programs. The committee heard from Assistant State Superintendent Henry Johnson and consultant Dennis Stacey.

Department consultant Norman Camp provided the committee with information on how the Intervention/Prevention grant program affected alternative learning programs in the State. Dr. Camp reported that of the 12 million funded for I/P grants, more than sixty percent was used to create alternative learning programs.

Department consultant Sylvia Massey reported on the use of Safe Schools grant money for alternative learning programs. Department consultant Grova Bridgers explained how the Department provides technical assistance to alternative learning programs. Linda Hyler, director of Cities in Schools in North Carolina presented the work of that program and on residential programs for at-risk students.

On **December 15, 1994** the Committee met to review its findings, recommendations (found at pages 7-8 of this report) and to form its legislative proposal (appendix G). At the meeting's conclusion Representative Pete Cunningham, LRC member, commended the committee for its work and recommended that the committee be continued to work further on alternative school issues.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee's findings and recommendations are included in its proposed legislation found in Appendix G of this report.

FINDINGS:

1. Funding for Alternative Schools should be expanded.
2. Alternative Schools should serve at-risk students at all levels; have a well-defined mission; use multiple strategies including serving children in the standard classroom and in separate facilities and programs; have strong community involvement; have high expectations for staff and students; and have a strong program evaluation component;
3. The Intervention/Prevention program is an appropriate grant program to assist school units in developing alternative learning programs;
4. The Intervention/Prevention Grant Program allows counties to apply to use funds under the Program to create alternative learning programs but does not especially earmark funds for alternative learning programs only;
5. The Intervention/Prevention Grant Program requirement that grants may only be received by high crime areas may need to be more flexible in order that the maximum number of school units may apply for and receive grants in order to create alternative learning programs;
6. There is a lack of consistency in the placement and referral of students into alternative learning programs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The definition of alternative learning program under the Intervention/Prevention Program should be expanded.

2. All alternative learning programs which could include involuntary placement of students or placement in connection with suspension or expulsion should include a placement and referral process based on a model to be developed by the State Board of Education.

3. Alternative educators should have an opportunity to comment on and have input into the evaluation system that the Department and the State Board will use to evaluate the programs.

4. All alternative learning programs in the State should be evaluated by a model to be developed by the State Board and the Department.

5. An alternative educators group should be convened to determine the technical assistance and training needs of these educators.

6. Eight million dollars should be appropriated for alternative learning program grants only under the Intervention/Prevention Program.

7. Grant applicants may present varying incidences of juvenile crime in the area to be served and still be eligible for funding.

8. The work of the committee should be continued.



APPENDIX A

HOUSE BILL 1319, 2ND EDITION

PART I.-----TITLE

Section 1. This act shall be known as "The Studies Act of 1993".

PART II.-----LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH COMMISSION

Sec. 2.1. The Legislative Research Commission may study the topics listed below. Listed with each topic is the 1993 bill or resolution that originally proposed the issue or study and the name of the sponsor. The Commission may consider the original bill or resolution in determining the nature, scope, and aspects of the study. The topics are:

.....

(90) Alternative Schools (S.B. 1200 - Gunter)

.....

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA

SESSION 1993

S

1

SENATE BILL 1200

Short Title: Study Alternative Schs.

(Public)

Sponsors: Senators Gunter; Martin of Guilford, Cooper, Smith, Forrester, Lee, Hartsell, Marshall, Gulley, Winner of Mecklenburg, Cochrane, Allran, Richardson, Edwards, Kerr, Seymour, Soles, Warren, Johnson, Jordan, Conder, Hoyle, Codrington, Perdue, Odom, Speed, Martin of Pitt, Ward, Folger, Plexico, Carpenter, Tally, Ballance, Hunt, Albertson, Simpson, Parnell, Shaw, Kaplan, Kincaid, and Winner of Buncombe.

Referred to: Rules and Operation of the Senate.

May 27, 1993

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1 AN ACT TO ESTABLISH THE LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION ON
2 ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLS, AND TO MAKE AN APPROPRIATION.

3 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

4 Section 1. There is established the Legislative Commission on
5 Alternative Schools (the "Study Commission") to study alternative schools,
6 alternative programs, and residential placements for disruptive or violent
7 students. The Study Commission shall consist of 16 members. . . .

8 Sec. 2. The purpose of the study is to investigate the following:

- 9 (1) Existing alternative schools and public and private programs
10 for disruptive students in North Carolina's schools, including
11 an examination of in-school and out-of-school suspension.
12 (2) Existing State, federal, and local fiscal resources dedicated to
13 alternative programs and schools for disruptive youth.
14 (3) Existing support systems outside of public schools for children
15 with histories of violent or anti-social behaviors.
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- (4) Existing alternative schools and programs, including independent and nonprofit efforts, for disruptive students in other states, and the academic and social success rates of students involved in these programs.
 - (5) New or pilot projects that address disruptive students in North Carolina.
 - (6) Local collaborative efforts among local officials concerned with disruptive youth (courts, law officials, youth services, etc.) that are related to alternative schools, alternative programs, and residential placements.
 - (7) Basic common components of successful alternative programs, including curriculum, staffing ratios, program activities, support staff needs, collaborative activities, use of educational technologies, and funding. The investigation of funding should include cost-efficient methods utilizing existing resources to provide alternative schools, alternative programs, and residential placements.
 - (8) Existing North Carolina residential sites and potential residential alternatives for disruptive or troubled youth.
 - (9) Analysis of the numbers and ages of students involved in highly disruptive or violent activities in the schools, including analysis of long-term suspensions and expulsions.
 - (10) Unique professional staff development needs for educators who deal specifically with disruptive or troubled youths in alternative programs.
 - (11) Support systems directed towards successful reentry of youth placed in alternative programs into mainstream school populations.

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1993 - 1994

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APPENDIX D

Part 8. Intervention/Prevention

Grant Program for North Carolina School Children.

§ 115C-238.40. Establishment of program; purpose.

There is established the Intervention/Prevention Grant Program for North Carolina School Children. The purpose of the program is to provide grants to local school administrative units for locally designed innovative local programs that target juvenile crime by (i) enhancing educational attainment through coordinated services to respond to the needs of students who are at risk of school failure and at risk of participation in juvenile crime and (ii) providing for a safe and secure learning environment. (1994, Ex. Sess., c. 24, s. 42(b).)

§ 115C-238.41. Applications for grants.

(a) A local school administrative unit may apply for a grant, or up to three adjacent local school administrative units may apply jointly for a grant.

(b) In preparing grant applications, an applicant shall consult with a local task force appointed by the county board of commissioners and comprised of educators, parents, students, community leaders, and representatives of the juvenile justice system, human services, and nongovernmental agencies providing services to children. To the extent possible, the task force shall be representative of the racial and socioeconomic composition of the geographic area to be served by the grant. If a local school administrative unit or the geographic area covered by a grant proposal is located in more than one county, the board of commissioners of the counties shall jointly appoint the task force.

(c) The application shall include the following information:

- (1) Data on the incidence of juvenile crime in the geographical area to be served by the grant. Sources of data may include the chief juvenile court counselor in the judicial district, the clerk of superior court, and local law enforcement officials.
- (2) An assessment of local resources from all sources for, and local deficiencies with regard to, responding to the needs of children who live in conditions that place them at risk of school failure. This assessment shall be prepared by the local task force.
- (3) A detailed plan for removing barriers to success in school that exist for these children and for minimizing disruptive and

violent behavior among all students. This plan shall include proposed goals and anticipated outcomes, prepared after consultation with the task force. This plan shall provide for the establishment or expansion of programs that have components based on one or more of the following models or other collaborative models:

- a. **School-based Resource Center Model.** -- A School-based Resource Center is a school-based center that coordinates the delivery of comprehensive and integrated services in or near a school to children from kindergarten through the eighth grade and their families. Services are provided through broad-based collaboration among governmental and nongovernmental agencies and persons reflective of the racial and socioeconomic diversity in a community. Services are designed to (i) prepare children to attain academic and social success, (ii) enhance the ability of families to become advocates for and supporters of education for the children in their families, (iii) provide parenting classes to the parents of children who are at risk of school failure, and (iv) otherwise enhance the ability of families to function as nurturing and effective family units.
- b. **After School Program Model.** -- An After School Program is a program that provides high quality educationally appropriate and recreational activities to students after the regular school day. The program may be targeted toward providing academic support for students who perform significantly below their age-level peers or for students with learning disabilities. Local boards of education may permit teachers to adjust their work schedules so they can work in the program.
- c. **Cities in Schools Program Model.** -- A Cities in Schools Program is a community partnership among public agencies, private nonprofit agencies, volunteer organizations, and local businesses that delivers services to students who are at risk of dropping out of school or who display discipline problems. Services offered are based on an assessment of local needs and resources.

- d. **Alternative Learning Program Model.** -- An Alternative Learning Program is a program that provides individualized programs outside of a standard classroom setting in a caring atmosphere in which students learn the skills necessary to redirect their lives and return to a standard classroom setting. The program should maintain State standards and may include smaller classes and lower student/teacher ratios, school-to-work transition activities, modification of curriculum and instruction to meet individual needs, flexible scheduling, and necessary academic, vocational, and support services for students and their families. Services may also include appropriate measures to correct disruptive behavior, teach responsibility, good citizenship, and respect for rules and authority.

The goals of the alternative school programs should be to (i) reduce the school dropout rate through improved student attendance, behavior, and educational achievement; and (ii) increase successful school-to-work transitions for students through educationally linked job internships, mentored job shadowing experiences, and the development of personalized education and career plans for participating students.

- e. **Safe Schools Program Model.** -- A Safe Schools Program is a locally designed program for making schools safe for students and school employees. The program may involve peer mediation and conflict resolution activities.
- (4) A statement of whether and to what extent the local board of education intends to contract with local, private, nonprofit 501(c)(3) corporations to staff, operate, or otherwise provide services for one or more elements of the plan. Local boards are encouraged to contract for services, when appropriate.
- (5) A statement of (i) how the grant funds would be used to address these local problems, (ii) what other resources, including Safe Schools Grants, Chapter 1 funds, Chapter 2 block grant funds, dropout prevention funds, Basic Education Program funds, remediation funds, small school system supplemental funds, and low-wealth counties supplemental funds, would be used to address the problems, and (iii) how

all available community resources and the components of the proposed plan would be coordinated to enhance the effectiveness of existing services and of services proposed in the plan.

- (6) A statement of how the proposed plan would assist a local school administrative unit in implementing the local school improvement plan.
- (7) A process for assessing on an annual basis the success of the local plan in addressing problems. (1994, Ex. Sess., c. 24, s. 42(b).)

§ 115C-238.42. Review of applications.

(a) The Superintendent of Public Instruction shall appoint a State task force to assist the Superintendent in reviewing grant applications. The State task force shall include representatives of the Department of Public Instruction, the Department of Human Resources, local school administrative units, educators, parents, the juvenile justice system, social services, and governmental agencies providing services to children, and other members the Superintendent considers appropriate. In appointing the State task force, the Superintendent shall consult with the Secretary of Human Resources in an effort to coordinate the membership of this State task force and those appointed by the Secretary pursuant to G.S. 143B-152.5 and G.S. 143B-152.13.

In reviewing grant applications, the Superintendent and the State task force shall consider the prevalence of underserved students and families in low-income neighborhoods and in isolated rural areas in the area for which the grant is requested, the severity of the local problems with regard to children at risk of school failure and with regard to school discipline, whether the proposed program meets State standards, and the likelihood that the locally designed plan will deal with the problems successfully.

During the review process, the Superintendent may recommend modifications in grant applications to applicants.

(b) The Superintendent shall submit recommendations to the State Board of Education on which applicants should receive grants and the amount they should receive. (1994, Ex. Sess., c. 24, s. 42(b).)

§ 115C-238.43. Award of grants.

In selecting grant recipients, the State Board shall consider (i) the recommendations of the Superintendent, (ii) the geographic location of the

applicants, and (iii) the demographic profile of the applicants. After considering these factors, the State Board shall give priority to grant applications that will serve areas that have a high incidence of juvenile crime and that propose different approaches that can serve as models for other communities.

The State Board shall select the grant recipients prior to July 15, 1994, for local programs that will be in operation at the beginning of the 1994-95 school year. The State Board shall select the grant recipients prior to October 1, 1994, for local programs that will be in operation after the beginning of the 1994-95 school year. (1994, Ex. Sess., c. 24, s. 42(b).)

§ 115C-238.44. Requests for modifications of grants or for additional funds to implement grants.

A grant recipient may request a modification of a grant or additional funds to implement a grant through the grant application process. The request shall be reviewed and accepted or rejected in the same manner as a grant application. (1994, Ex. Sess., c. 24, s. 42(b).)

§ 115C-238.45. Administration of the grant program.

The Superintendent of Public Instruction shall administer the grant program, under the direction of the State Board of Education. The Department of Public Instruction shall provide technical assistance to grant applicants and recipients. (1994, Ex. Sess., c. 24, s. 42(b).)

§ 115C-238.46. Cooperation of State and local agencies.

All agencies of the State and local government, including departments of social services, health departments, local mental health, mental retardation, and substance abuse authorities, court personnel, law enforcement agencies, The University of North Carolina, the community college system, and cities and counties, shall cooperate with the Department of Public Instruction, local boards of education, and local nonprofit corporations that receive grants in coordinating the program at the State level and in implementing the program at the local level. The Superintendent, after consultation with the Secretary of Human Resources, shall develop a plan for ensuring the cooperation of State agencies and local agencies, and encouraging the cooperation of private

entities, especially those receiving State funds, in the coordination and implementation of the program. (1994, Ex. Sess., c. 24, s. 42(b).)

§ 115C-238.47. Program evaluation; reporting requirements.

(a) The Department of Public Instruction shall develop and implement an evaluation system, under the direction of the State Board of Education, that will assess the efficiency and effectiveness of the Intervention/Prevention Grant Program. The Department shall design this system to:

- (1) Provide information to the Department and to the General Assembly on how to improve and refine the programs;
- (2) Enable the Department and the General Assembly to assess the overall quality, efficiency, and impact of the existing programs;
- (3) Enable the Department and the General Assembly to determine whether to modify the Intervention/Prevention Grant Program; and
- (4) Provide a detailed fiscal analysis of how State funds for these programs were used.

(b) The State Board of Education shall report to the General Assembly and the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee by May 15, 1994, on its progress in developing the evaluation system and in developing and implementing the program. It shall report prior to February 1, 1995, on the evaluation system developed by the Department and on program implementation. The State Board of Education shall present an annual report on October 1, 1995, and annually thereafter to the General Assembly and to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee on (i) the implementation of the program, (ii) the results of the program evaluation, (iii) how the funds appropriated by the General Assembly for the program are being used, (iv) additional funds required to implement the program, and (v) any necessary modifications to the program. (1994, Ex. Sess., c. 24, s. 42(b).)



NORTH CAROLINA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

February 7, 1994

The Honorable James B. Hunt, Jr.
Governor of North Carolina
State Capitol
Raleigh, N.C. 27601-2905

Dear Governor Hunt:

We are writing this letter in response to a request from the Legislative Research Commission Study Committee on Alternative Schools regarding the coming special session of the General Assembly. It was the unanimous feeling of the committee that the Co-Chairs should express certain basic concerns to both Legislative leadership and the Governor prior to the special session.

The Committee already has investigated a variety of issues regarding alternative schools in North Carolina and is due to present an interim report on the topic prior to the 1994 Session with a final report to the 1995 Session.

The Committee agreed that the funding of alternative schools should be addressed by the General Assembly in the special session. The committee believes that alternative schools should be an important part of a state strategy to both keep our schools safe and secure, as well as provide appropriate educational support for troubled and disruptive students. It is clear that troubled students need additional support and services beyond that which is provided in most schools. Full collaboration between schools and other community agencies that provide family and youth support services is critical to the academic success of troubled youth.

As Co-chairs of the committee, we hope that appropriate consideration can be given to the funding of alternative schools as a crime prevention measure. Providing quality educational alternatives that offer a better chance to youth who have not succeeded in traditional settings is a logical solution to many of our current crime-related problems. Successful alternative schools will keep youth off the street, away from crime, and headed towards graduation and employment. We feel confident that alternative schools funding can be used well by local school and community officials who are seeking options that offer the promise of crime prevention both in our schools and communities.

The committee has heard important testimony from a variety of successful local programs and has offered its expertise to provide supportive recommendations to any



The Honorable James B. Hunt, Jr.
Page 2
February 7, 1994

initiative that might result from the special session. We appreciate your consideration of this important request, and we look forward to working with you in the special session to see that funding for alternative schools is given appropriate consideration.

Sincerely yours,

Senator Linda Gunter

Representative James B. Black

Co-Chairs
LRC Alternative Schools Study Committee

Copy to: The Honorable Marc Basnight
The Honorable Daniel T. Blue, Jr.
The Honorable Beverly Perdue
The Honorable Anne Barnes
Members of the Committee

ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLS COMMITTEE - MAY 1994 PROGRESS REPORT

The Committee met January 26, February 2 and May 4, 1994 to study various issues related to alternative schools for at-risk and disruptive youth. Speakers included Calvin Wallace and Ken Mazzeferro, Charlotte-Mecklenburg schools; Peggy Mainess and Tammy Beck, Catawba Valley High School; Gloria Richeson, Bill McNeal, Patricia Johnson, Laura Miller, Ricki Grantmyre, Debbie Bine, Rob Harris-Cannon, Wake County Schools; Carolyn Biggerstaff and Bob Carr, The Options Program; Suzanne Mellow, Janice Linkler and Buddy Marion, Alleghany County, Patricia Brewer, Pitt County; Don Tassie, Jackson, Michigan Alternative Schools; Vann Langston, Dennis Stacey, Johnnie Grissom, Philip Price, Department of Public Instruction.

The Committee has reviewed existing programs in North Carolina, some out-of-state programs; State, federal and local funding sources for alternative schools; and the success rates for students in alternative learning programs.

The Committee supports earmarking funds for alternative schools programs. The Committee has reviewed the legislation passed during the 1994 extra session. Though several of those programs target at-risk youth, including Intervention Prevention funds that can be used for alternative learning programs, Program Positions to Assist Children At-risk of School Failure, S.O.S. and Family Resource Centers, no funding is specifically set aside to create and continue alternative school programs. Educators tell us that there is a real need for funds to create alternative learning programs and schools. The Committee believes that funds should be set aside to create and continue alternative learning programs. These programs should:

- serve at-risk students at all levels
- have a well-defined mission
- use multiple strategies including serving children in the regular classroom and in separate facilities and programs
- have strong community involvement
- have high-expectations for staff and students, and
- have a strong program evaluation component.

The Committee will continue to study elements of its charge including an investigation of existing alternative schools; identification of criteria for successful alternative schools; success rates of students in these programs; funding sources; an examination of in-school and out-of-school suspension and the number and ages of students involved; and support systems in the communities for disruptive students. The Committee will make its final report and recommendations to the 1995 General Assembly.

APPENDIX G
BILL SUMMARY

A Bill to Implement the Recommendations of the Alternative School Committee would appropriate eight million dollars to be earmarked for alternative learning programs under the Intervention/Prevention Program. The bill also addresses issues concerning technical assistance and training, evaluation of programs, and placement and referral of students.

Section 1 amends the Intervention/Prevention Program to further clarify and define the purpose and goals of alternative learning programs and to require that if an alternative learning program funded under Intervention/Prevention could include the involuntary placement of students in the program or placement in connection with suspension or expulsion than the program shall include a process of placement and referral of students based on a model to be developed by the State Board of Education.

Section 2 amends G.S. 115C-238.47 to provide that local program administrators and educators will have an opportunity to comment on and receive information concerning how programs under the Intervention/Prevention program will be evaluated.

Section 3 amends Article 16 of Chapter 115C to add a new Part 9 on Alternative Learning Programs. G.S. 115C-238.50 would require that all alternative learning programs regardless of funding source would be subject to evaluation.

G.S. 115C-238.51 would direct the Department to collect data to determine the success of alternative learning programs and to coordinate the efforts of program specialists to assist local programs.

G.S. 115C-238.52 would require all alternative learning programs which could include the involuntary referral and placement of students, or placement in connection with suspension or expulsion to adopt a placement and referral process based on a model developed by the State Board.

Section 4 would direct the Superintendent of Public Instruction to convene the Alternative Educators Planning Group so it may determine the technical assistance and training needs of alternative educators and develop a plan for submission to the State Board of Education and the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee.

Section 5 would direct the State Board of Education to study issues of referral and placement of students into alternative learning programs and to develop and disseminate model procedures for use by local school units.

Section 6 Appropriates 8 million dollars to implement alternative learning programs only under the Intervention/Prevention Program. Of these funds up to \$200,000 may be used by the Department to implement the act and for evaluation of the Intervention/Prevention Programs.

Section 7 modifies the award process for alternative schools under the Intervention/Prevention program by allowing grants to be awarded to units with varying incidences of juvenile crime.

The act would be effective July 1, 1995.

- 1 (1) Data on the incidence of juvenile crime in the geographical area to
2 be served by the grant. Sources of data may include the chief
3 juvenile court counselor in the judicial district, the clerk of
4 superior court, and local law enforcement officials.
- 5 (2) An assessment of local resources from all sources for, and local
6 deficiencies with regard to, responding to the needs of children
7 who live in conditions that place them at risk of school failure.
8 This assessment shall be prepared by the local task force.
- 9 (3) A detailed plan for removing barriers to success in school that exist
10 for these children and for minimizing disruptive and violent
11 behavior among all students. This plan shall include proposed
12 goals and anticipated outcomes, prepared after consultation with
13 the task force. This plan shall provide for the establishment or
14 expansion of programs that have components based on one or
15 more of the following models or other collaborative models:
- 16 a. School-based Resource Center Model. -- A School-based
17 Resource Center is a school-based center that coordinates
18 the delivery of comprehensive and integrated services in or
19 near a school to children from kindergarten through the
20 eighth grade and their families. Services are provided
21 through broad-based collaboration among governmental and
22 nongovernmental agencies and persons reflective of the
23 racial and socioeconomic diversity in a community.
24 Services are designed to (i) prepare children to attain
25 academic and social success, (ii) enhance the ability of
26 families to become advocates for and supporters of
27 education for the children in their families, (iii) provide
28 parenting classes to the parents of children who are at risk
29 of school failure, and (iv) otherwise enhance the ability of
30 families to function as nurturing and effective family units.
- 31 b. After School Program Model. -- An After School Program is
32 a program that provides high quality educationally
33 appropriate and recreational activities to students after the
34 regular school day. The program may be targeted toward
35 providing academic support for students who perform
36 significantly below their age-level peers or for students with
37 learning disabilities. Local boards of education may permit
38 teachers to adjust their work schedules so they can work in
39 the program.
- 40 c. Cities in Schools Program Model. -- A Cities in Schools
41 Program is a community partnership among public agencies,
42 private nonprofit agencies, volunteer organizations, and
43 local businesses that delivers services to students who are at
44 risk of dropping out of school or who display discipline

1 problems. Services offered are based on an assessment of
2 local needs and resources.

- 3 d. Alternative Learning Program Model. -- An Alternative
4 Learning Program is a program that ~~provides~~ may be
5 designed: (i) to serve students at any level; (ii) for suspended
6 or expelled students; (iii) for students whose learning styles
7 are better served in an alternative program; (iv) to use
8 multiple strategies including serving students in the standard
9 classroom, or by providing individualized programs outside
10 of a standard classroom setting in a caring atmosphere in
11 which students learn the skills necessary to redirect their
12 lives and return to a standard classroom setting. ~~The~~

13 A program should maintain State standards and may
14 include smaller classes and lower student/teacher ratios,
15 school-to-work transition activities, modification of
16 curriculum and instruction to meet individual needs, flexible
17 scheduling, and necessary academic, vocational, and support
18 services for students and their families. Services may also
19 include appropriate measures to correct disruptive behavior,
20 teach responsibility, good citizenship, and respect for rules
21 and authority.

22 An alternative learning program should have a well-
23 defined mission and high expectations for staff and students.
24 The goals of the program should target ~~The goals of the~~
25 alternative school programs should be to (i) ~~reduce the~~
26 school dropout rate reducing school dropout rates through
27 improved student attendance, behavior, and educational
28 achievement; achievement. and (ii) When appropriate,
29 programs should increase successful school-to-work
30 transitions for students through educationally linked job
31 internships, mentored job shadowing experiences, and the
32 development of personalized education and career plans for
33 participating students.

- 34 e. Safe Schools Program Model. -- A Safe Schools Program is
35 a locally designed program for making schools safe for
36 students and school employees. The program may involve
37 peer mediation and conflict resolution activities.

- 38 (4) A statement of whether and to what extent the local board of
39 education intends to contract with local, private, nonprofit
40 501(c)(3) corporations to staff, operate, or otherwise provide
41 services for one or more elements of the plan. Local boards are
42 encouraged to contract for services, when appropriate.

- 43 (5) A statement of (i) how the grant funds would be used to address
44 these local problems, (ii) what other resources, including Safe

1 Schools Grants, Chapter 1 funds, Chapter 2 block grant funds,
2 dropout prevention funds, Basic Education Program funds,
3 remediation funds, small school system supplemental funds, and
4 low-wealth counties supplemental funds, would be used to address
5 the problems, and (iii) how all available community resources and
6 the components of the proposed plan would be coordinated to
7 enhance the effectiveness of existing services and of services
8 proposed in the plan.

9 (6) A statement of how the proposed plan would assist a local school
10 administrative unit in implementing the local school improvement
11 plan.

12 (7) A process for assessing on an annual basis the success of the local
13 plan in addressing problems.

14 (8) A process for placement and referral of students into alternative
15 learning programs: If the proposal would create an alternative
16 learning program which could include involuntary placement of
17 students or placement in connection with suspension or expulsion,
18 the proposal shall include a placement and referral process based
19 on a model developed by the State Board of Education to be used
20 by the alternative learning programs."

21 Sec. 2. G.S. 115C-238.47 reads as rewritten:

22 "§ 115C-238.47. Program evaluation; reporting requirements.

23 (a) The Department of Public Instruction shall develop and implement an
24 evaluation system, under the direction of the State Board of Education, that will
25 assess the efficiency and effectiveness of the Intervention/Prevention Grant Program.
26 The Department shall design this system to:

27 (1) Provide information to local program administrators and teachers,
28 the Department and to the General Assembly on how to improve
29 and refine the programs;

30 (2) Enable local program administrators and teachers, the Department
31 and the General Assembly to assess the overall quality, efficiency,
32 and impact of the existing programs;

33 (3) Enable the Department and the General Assembly to determine
34 whether to modify the Intervention/Prevention Grant Program; and

35 (4) Provide a detailed fiscal analysis of how State funds for these
36 programs were used.

37 (b) The State Board of Education shall report to the General Assembly and the
38 Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee by May 15, 1994, on its progress in
39 developing the evaluation system and in developing and implementing the program.
40 It shall report prior to February 1, 1995, on the evaluation system developed by the
41 Department and on program implementation. The State Board of Education shall
42 present an annual report on October 1, 1995, and annually thereafter to the General
43 Assembly and to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee on (i) the
44 implementation of the program, (ii) the results of the program evaluation, (iii) how

1 the funds appropriated by the General Assembly for the program are being used, (iv)
2 additional funds required to implement the program, ~~and~~ (v) any necessary
3 modifications to the ~~program.~~ program, and (vi) comments received from local
4 program administrators, and particularly alternative learning program administrators
5 and educators concerning the evaluation system and the program generally.

6 Prior to the annual report on October 1, 1995, and annually thereafter the Board
7 shall provide an opportunity for local program administrators, and particularly
8 alternative learning program administrators and educators to comment on the
9 evaluation system. The comments of the local program administrators, and
10 particularly the alternative learning program administrators and educators shall be
11 considered by the Board in any proposed modification to the system."

12 Sec. 3. Article 16 of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes is amended
13 by adding a new Part to read:

14 "Part 9. Alternative Learning Programs.

15 "§ 115C-238.50. Definition and evaluation.

16 (a) An alternative learning program is a program defined in G.S. 115C-
17 238.41(c)(3)d. Beginning with the 1995-96 school year, alternative learning programs
18 in the public schools, whether funded with local, State or federal monies, whether
19 administered under Part 8 of Article 16 of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes or
20 some other program, shall be evaluated using the method for evaluation of alternative
21 learning programs designed under G.S. 115C-238.47.

22 (b) Beginning with the 1995-96 school year, the Department of Public Instruction
23 shall collect baseline data initially and on an annual basis that will be used to
24 evaluate the success of alternative learning programs over a five-year period. The
25 baseline data shall include student attendance rates, dropout rates, student test scores,
26 incidences of disruptive behavior in schools, incidences of juvenile crime, and the
27 rate of successful transition from school to school and to employment or college.

28 "§ 115C-238.51. Alternative educators assistance.

29 The Department of Public Instruction shall coordinate the efforts of its specialists,
30 and, to the extent possible, specialists in other private and public agencies, in the
31 areas of dropout prevention, drug abuse prevention, in-school suspension, and
32 children with special needs so it can provide coordinated assistance to the alternative
33 learning programs in local school administrative units.

34 "§ 115C-238.52. Placement and referral of students into alternative learning
35 programs.

36 If an alternative learning program, as that term is defined under G.S. 115C-
37 238.41(c)(3)d., whether funded with local, State, or federal monies, whether
38 administered under Part 8 of Article 16 of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes or
39 some other program, could include involuntary placement of students or placement
40 in connection with suspension or expulsion, the program shall include a placement
41 and referral process based on a model developed by the State Board of Education."

42 Sec. 4. The Superintendent of Public Instruction shall convene an
43 Alternative Educators Planning Group of up to 15 outstanding practicing alternative
44 school educators so that they may define the needs for technical assistance and

1 training for alternative school educators and determine how to best meet those needs.
2 The educators shall represent the geographic, racial, and gender diversity of the State
3 and shall include administrators, teachers, and counselors. The Superintendent shall
4 solicit the recommendations of alternative school educators to determine the
5 membership of the group. The educators shall elect a chairperson from among the
6 group and shall determine a meeting schedule to suit their needs. The
7 Superintendent shall provide meeting space and clerical assistance. The Planning
8 Group shall report the plan for service to the State Board of Education and the Joint
9 Legislative Education Oversight Committee no later than February 1, 1996, at which
10 time the Planning Group shall terminate, though nothing in this act shall prevent the
11 group from continuing to meet on a voluntary basis. Members of the Alternative
12 Educators Planning Group shall receive per diem, subsistence, and travel allowances
13 in accordance with G.S. 120-138-5 or G.S. 138-6, as appropriate.

14 Sec. 5. The State Board of Education shall study the issue of referral and
15 placement of students into alternative learning programs and shall develop model
16 procedures for the referral and placement of students into alternative learning
17 programs. In accordance with G.S. 115C-238.52, these model procedures may be used
18 by local school administrative units. In developing these procedures, the Board shall
19 consider that students may be recommended for referral to these programs in a
20 number of ways including administrator, teacher, parent, and self-referral; that
21 participation may be voluntary or mandatory depending on the type of student and
22 program; and any due process requirements which may apply. In developing these
23 guidelines, the Board shall consult with the Alternative Educators Planning Group
24 created in Section 3 of this act and solicit comments from other alternative school
25 educators in the State; and may consult with representatives of the North Carolina
26 School Boards Association, and professional education organizations. The Board
27 shall develop the model procedures and shall disseminate them to local school boards
28 and alternative learning programs no later than February 1, 1996.

29 Sec. 6. There is appropriated from the General Fund to State Aid for
30 Local School Administrative Units the sum of eight million dollars (\$8,000,000) to be
31 used for each year of the 1995-97 fiscal biennium to implement only alternative
32 learning programs under the Intervention/Prevention Grant Program, Part 8 of Article
33 16 of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes, as amended by this act. Of the funds
34 appropriated in this section, up to two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000) may be
35 used by the Department of Public Instruction to implement this act including the
36 evaluation of alternative learning programs.

37 Sec. 7. In awarding grants for alternative learning programs under this
38 act, the State Board of Education shall give first consideration to high quality
39 applications for alternative learning programs not selected for funding previously
40 under the Intervention/Prevention Grant Program because the area to be served by
41 the applicant presented a lower incidence of juvenile crime than other applications.
42 New applications for high quality alternative learning programs serving areas with
43 varying incidences of juvenile crime may also be selected for funding under this act.

44 Sec. 8. This act becomes effective July 1, 1995.